



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

The **Charlotte Mason Digital Collection** is a not-for-profit database created in 2009-2011 to assist scholars, researchers, educators and students to discover, use, and build upon the Charlotte Mason Collection of archives, journals and books housed in the Armitt Library & Museum (UK). To learn more about this database or to search the digital collection, go to [The Charlotte Mason Digital Collection](#).

Your use of images from the **Charlotte Mason Digital Collection** is subject to a [License](#). To publish images for commercial purposes, a license fee must be submitted and permission received prior to publication. To publish or present images for non-profit purposes, the owner, Redeemer University College, must be notified at cmdc@redeemer.ca and submission of a copy of the context in which it was used also must be submitted to the owner at cmdc@redeemer.ca. Credit lines, as specified in the [License](#), must accompany both the commercial and non-profit use of each image.

Unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal nor may you make multiple copies of any of the digital images. Higher resolution images are available. [Low resolution (150 dpi), single copy printing is permitted: High resolution images for publication can be purchased. Please contact Redeemer University College in writing as specified in the [License](#) to request high resolution images.

While the document originals are housed in the Armitt Library & Museum, Redeemer University College owns the rights to the Digital Images (in jpg/pdf format) of the original archival documents and artifacts. The original Digital Images and database metadata are owned and maintained by Redeemer University College. Multiple images are bound together in PDF Packages. Click [here](#) to download the latest version of Adobe Reader for better viewing. In the PDF, click an image thumbnail to view it.

This project was made possible through collaboration among the [Armitt Library & Museum](#) (Ambleside, UK), [Redeemer University College](#) (Ancaster, Canada) and the [University of Cumbria](#) (UK) and with the financial assistance of the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada](#).

Need help? If you do **not** see a side-bar with image thumbnails:

Some of the PDF packages are large and will take some time to download. A very large PDF package may open more successfully if you download it first to your desktop. (From inside the database record, right-click on the link to the PDF package and save the link to your desktop.) Once it's on your desktop, you can open it up with a recent version of [Adobe Reader](#).

If you have a Macintosh with Safari, the default program to open PDFs is Preview, which does not open the PDF packets. Mac users need to download [Adobe Reader](#). If this cover page appears without a list of PDF files (either at the side or bottom of the screen), look for a paper clip or a menu option to view attachments. If you click that, you should see a list of the pages in the PDF package.

Viewing files with Linux: This works with the default PDF viewer that comes pre-installed with Ubuntu. While viewing this cover page in the PDF viewer, click "View" on the top toolbar, and check the box that says "Side Panel". That will bring up the side panel. The side panel will show only this cover page. Click the 'arrow' at the top of the side panel, and it will give you the option to view "attachments." If you click that, you should see a list of PDF files, which are the pages in the PDF package.

mathematics, so that each should become illustrative and explicative of the other, instead of being taken, as was generally the case, in what he called "*water-tight compartments*." This system, he held, could be easily and advantageously followed with the youngest teachable children, by means of intelligent teaching and suitable diagrams, of which he gave specimens, the walls of the room being profusely decorated with some very artistic and well-executed specimens of his pupils' work in mathematical design. The lecture was followed by an extremely interesting and instructive discussion.

WEYBRIDGE.—A meeting was held at Haddon House, Weybridge (by kind permission of Mrs. Vernon Harcourt), on Wednesday, Feb. 10th. The weather was extremely bad, but there was a fairly large audience, who listened with interest to a lecture on "Discipline," by Mrs. Ennis Richmond. At the close, Lord Stamford proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer.

WINCHESTER.—On Wednesday, Jan. 20th, at a meeting held (by kind invitation of Mrs. Alexander) at Bolton Lodge, Miss Lathom, of St. Mary's College, Paddington, read an able and interesting paper on "The Training of Teachers for Secondary Schools." She pointed out that to secure a good teacher was the one essential point in all education; that the personality of the teachers was of supreme importance, and that the nobility of the vocation of teaching should be fully recognised by all classes of society, so that the very best men and women should be drawn into that profession. In her opinion there would shortly be in England a very great dearth of teachers for secondary schools, a matter that would become a most serious difficulty in education. Miss Lathom advocated strongly the training of teachers, but thought that the present system of the Training Colleges and Courses of Training was by no means the ideal one. There was a discussion after the paper.—The next meeting will be held at 26, St. Swithin Street, when Mr. Cowan has kindly consented to give a lantern lecture on "Flowers."

WOODFORD AND WANSTEAD.—On Oct. 1st, 1903, there was a meeting held, the lecture being "Snapshot Drawing," by Mr. Ablett, illustrated with lantern slides. It aroused considerable interest, as his methods were unknown to several members, and the results of his system of teaching as seen on the screen were truly remarkable.—The November meeting was a social gathering, when the Branch Secretary read an account of some of the papers delivered at the Conference in October. This was followed by a delightful programme of music and recitations.—In January Rev. W. Manning, Vicar of St. Andrew's, Leytonstone, delivered a striking address on "Religious Education and Education in Religion." Some of the views expressed were too advanced to meet with the cordial assent of all the members. Several members spoke, all in agreement with the lecturer.—*Natural History Club*.—On Jan. 30th, in spite of a pouring wet afternoon, the Natural History Club meeting was a great success, 42 people being present, and Miss Curwen's lecture on "British Reptiles," which was illustrated by magic lantern (the latter being managed by Mr. Hargrave) was much appreciated by the children. The President, Miss E. L. Fowler, was in the chair. A gratifying result of the meeting was the enlistment of several new members. The next meeting will be in March, when Miss L. Fowler will read a paper on "The Buds of Trees," a subject which is bound to appeal to all who live so near Epping Forest.

THE PARENTS' REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE
OF HOME-TRAINING AND CULTURE.

"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

Vol. XV. No. 4.]

[APRIL, 1904.]

THE CULTURE OF THE SPIRIT-LIFE IN CHILDHOOD.*

BY THE REV. W. E. FLETCHER, M.A.

IF we would understand the life of the body, as distinct and separate from the life of the soul and spirit, we have only to gaze on the first drunkard or libertine we meet. In such men the life of the body is predominant. The animalism of the nature—the physical—has usurped the throne of the being, and holds in subjection, though rebellious subjection, the noble life of the soul and the eternal life of the spirit. The soul pleads by all that is rational, and the spirit by all that is divine and beautiful, that the sensual should not rule; but the reins of power are in the body's grasp, and soul and spirit must be obedient to its law, or crushed and, if needs be, destroyed if they try to impede its course or thwart its desires.

The soul, in like manner, can claim and hold the mastery, and act almost irrespective of body and spirit. It can be so completely absorbed in its own pursuit as to become oblivious to every claim of the body and every desire of the spirit. The scientist and discoverer can be as steeped in selfish intelligence as the libertine in selfish indulgence. The man who, to acquire knowledge, ignores the just claims of his body, and disregards the moral obligations due to his wife and children, is grievously guilty of living the life of the soul to the detriment of the body and spirit.

Now we come to the spirit-life, and by an illustration we can best demonstrate both its individuality and its glorious quality.

* A lecture given to the Ipswich branch of the P.N.E.U.

A young man late one night, or to be more exact very early one morning, was once passing along a well-nigh deserted street of one of our large cities, when glancing towards an important building, he noticed a cloud of smoke proceeding from a partially opened upper window. The building was on fire. In a few moments he was battling with the flames, heroically endeavouring to rescue a woman who was lying half-suffocated and unconscious. From what part of that man's nature did that chivalrous deed proceed? It was not from the physical, for the body shudders at pain, it hates suffering, but loves arm-chairs and soft cushions. It was not from the mental, for every atom of the man's soul would have suggested the madness of his action. He had a wife and child awaiting his return home, and was only a clerk in an office where no pensions were awarded for bravery. It was from the spirit that the deed proceeded. It was the spirit-life that dictated his conduct—the life that made the Czarina some years ago in loving compassion kiss the cholera patients in one of the Russian hospitals—the life that made some of our gentle sisters volunteer for the front in the recent South African war—the life that ever reflects the power and beauty of a Life lived in Palestine nearly two thousand years ago, and which, by its virtue transformed the world. It is to that life—the spiritual, the immortal, the divine—that we teachers of religion appeal. It is in that life, and that life only, that the promise of salvation dwells. No man can be saved by creeds or redeemed by law, but men will rise to their true greatness as the spirit-life, through the inspiration of God, brings body and soul into subjection to its omnipotent power. For however advantageous it may be to educate the mind, or however necessary it may be to study hygiene and minister to the health, it is neither intellectual power nor physical perfection which is the real secret of a child's destiny. It is the spirit-life, the life which creates the noblest character, writes the fairest history, and wields the mightiest influence. Some day, perhaps, this fact will be indisputably accepted, and the world will believe as an axiom Ruskin's incontrovertible dictum, "You do not educate a child by teaching him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not," which unhappily is not believed at present.

At this point I would differentiate between the words educate and cultivate. The root meaning of the word

"educate" is to draw out, while that of "cultivate" is to till. The word "educate" suggests a direct, but the word "cultivate" an indirect method. I have laid stress upon the meaning of these words to emphasise the fact, that, the treatment of the spirit-life in childhood is one of cultivation rather than education. The growth or development of the life is produced by tilling its soil, shielding it from the bitter frost and cold, and surrounding it with an environment which will nurture and satisfy its nature. And the chief part of this work must necessarily devolve upon parents, because it must be done before the time of "the soul's awakening."

The life of childhood can be described as consisting of three stages. In the first, the claims of the body are paramount. Then the whole experience is comprised by feeling, feeding, and sleeping.

In the second stage the spirit-life is predominant. Then the whole world is to the child's imagination filled with love, poetry, frolic, and fancy—no gaunt grim shadow of hapless sorrow flits across the sunlit pathway—the arm of father is strong enough to avert every catastrophe, and the affection of mother is reciprocated in clinging faith and passionate kisses. Then is the parents' golden age of opportunity, then and then only, for it never dawns again in such cloudless splendour. Soon the third stage will be entered, soon the light will fade from fancy's visions, soon, too soon, will come the bitter experience and the dread suggestions of dauntless reason. Then the fairy world with its lordly castles and steel-clad knights will vanish "as a dream when one awaketh." It is an awful awakening for many children. With fiendish glee this soul-life strides into their being, and tosses the books of fairy tales through the windows. It tears down the drapery from the child's idols, laughs at its exquisite modesty, and forces its eyes to look upon the ravages of sorrow and suffering, of sin and evil, as it exclaims with impious challenge, Whither? Whence? How? Why? Wherefore?

But it is the spirit-life of childhood we want to chiefly consider, and to determine how we can cultivate it so that it retains its fair visions and resplendent purity while it wrestles in conflict with the soul. In the first place I would say, let us remember that we cannot satisfy a spirit-nature with the presentation of a code of ethics, not even if the code is as exalted in morality as the suggested Tower of Babel was to be in altitude.

Manners are not righteousness and courtly grace may prove to be but masked hypocrisy. Although we cannot eradicate dogma from religious instruction without producing disastrous consequences, yet enforced obedience to dogmatic assertion is slavery. If dogma is the concise but scientific expression of truth—and this it claims to be—then its place is after thought, and belongs chiefly, if not entirely, to the last volume of the work on education and not to the first. Religion is self-restraint, and not parental or even church authority. But here let me venture to meet the difficulty that will probably be suggested by this seeming depreciation of dogma. It is said that every tenet of the Christian Faith is fraught with mystery; if therefore a child is not to repeat the Creed until he understands its meaning, he will never repeat it. This I disallow. A child can honestly say, "I believe in God." The conviction of the existence of God, without understanding His nature, is an easy experience to a child. When that conviction has arrived, then the child should be taught to make the declaration, "I believe in God"; and the like principle I hold concerning the other articles of the Faith. But because such a method of instruction has not been adopted, we have caused children to imagine that faith is blind assent to authority and *the* Faith is an authoritative demand of assent. The result of all this is, many so-called Christians are not intelligent devotees of truth, but slaves of a religious system which alas they fear to investigate lest it should fall to pieces. Such a pitiable attitude of thought would be impossible if religious teachers had always remembered that their appeal must be to the spirit. Then faith would claim its rightful position, for faith is the assent of the spirit to those parts of truth which lie beyond the realms of demonstration—the consciousness of a nature feeling the distant good despite the immediate evil. It was such a faith that led Tennyson to write—

"Somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill."
"... Nothing walks with aimless feet
That no one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete."
"... Like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered 'I have felt.'"

With Tennyson the sentiments I have quoted were not the expression of a pious hope, but a confident faith. Such a faith is the priceless possession of few men, but it is the common heritage of childhood, with this difference, that children weave into it the stories derived from their fairy tales, and the romance of their splendid imagination. Their visions therefore are born of faith and imagination; but since purity is the lens for beholding the infinite we do not wonder that the visions are beautiful, though we smile as they drape them in the personified garb of their innocent thought. But this capacity of the spirit-life of childhood creates a grave responsibility for parents. To the child God is strong, brave, and can do all things—even stronger, braver, and more powerful than father. He loves—like mother. The child's conception of God is the intensified ideal presented to the mind by the life of the parents. What manner of men and women ought fathers and mothers to be! Their influence—who shall describe its potency for good or evil? Theirs is the light that guides, and only when great wrong is wrought is there a chance of it losing its brightness.

In the realisation of these facts let us ask: What example in regard to "religion" do parents exhibit to their children? Concerning this matter mothers are not so seriously at fault as fathers. Is it remarkable that boys often imagine that religion is not a manly creed but an effeminate sentiment, when fathers persistently refuse to exhibit their faith? Why should fathers who take an interest in art or literature reveal their fondness for their books and pictures, and yet, although they firmly believe in God hide that belief from their children? If the boy never sees his father kneel in prayer, except in the church on Sunday, it is not unreasonable for him to conclude that the church is the only place for prayer, and Sunday the only day for worship. Each home should be a sanctuary, each father the priest of the household. Then sons in the hour of temptation would flee first to this refuge, and the parents' counsel would be sought instead of the advice of strangers. Alas! family prayer is a dying custom, with the result that the home is regarded as but little more sacred than a lodging. One short united daily prayer might yet redeem the position, and home again become hallowed with God's supplicated benediction.

Writing about the prayers in the home naturally suggests a question respecting the prayers of the children. Is it impossible to find some prayers to teach them, which are dignified yet simple, devotional yet not sentimental? Such prayers are needed, and if they are not to be found, parents who should understand the needs of their children must undertake the task of framing them for them. But care should be exercised to prevent the *saying* instead of the *praying* of prayers. If mothers would encourage their children to pray *with* them and not tell the children to say their prayers *to* them, religious formalism would not be so common.

As I have already indicated, one great characteristic of the spirit-life in childhood is its splendid imagination, an imagination strong and intense, yet pure and beautiful. It vests the battered face of the ugly doll with a charm such as the fairest lady of the land might envy. It substitutes divine form for half-melted wax or half-expended sawdust. To its vision the waving trees in winter are grim stalwart giants, and in spring fairy-palaces lit with pale green lamps. In summer they are forests, the homes of the kindest yet most impish gnomes, who drink from the scented flowers which surround them; and in autumn their rich varied colour has a beauty and meaning which older eyes fail to see and older hearts cannot appreciate.

What are parents doing with this romance of childhood? It must not be treated with ill-concealed sufferance. It is this romance of childhood, tempered by thought and experience, that has produced our greatest pictures, written our noblest poems, created our sweetest music, and touched all human relationships with its exquisite genius. It is this power of imagination that makes children appreciate the beautiful. Do we try to cultivate it by supplying it with that which it can appreciate? The choicest flowers might be almost worshipped in the nursery, while artificial ones are almost good enough for some drawing rooms; and it is this power of imagination that makes the child delight in story-telling. Because this power had not perished in those who sat at the feet of the Divine Teacher, He recognised it and ministered to it. Cannot we do likewise? The most profound wisdom ever taught was woven into His unparalleled stories. Look

at the lilies of the field as He showed them to His disciples; see the sower in the distant valley scattering the precious seed, and the shepherd searching on the lonely mountain-side for the lamb that had foolishly strayed, and the sorrowful and repentant prodigal wearily returning to the old homestead. And each story had a hidden meaning which evoked the spirit-life of His eagerly listening audience. Those stories have not lost their charm nor their meaning. What child is tired of hearing them? Could we not more often use the Bible for their story-book? Could anything satisfy their love of romance like the story of the cloven sky and angels' visit, and the wondering shepherds, and the dim-lit manger and the Holy Child? And if we turn to the Old Testament, there too we find tales of incomparable beauty—tales of noble heroism and brave adventure.

Then the Bible is not only a book of stories, but rather a library of classical thought and writing, embracing parable, history, prophecy, poetry, and philosophy. If our children fail to appreciate the book it must be because they have never rightly been taught how to read it. That they should be thus taught is obvious, for its message is not only written in its pages, but also in art, architecture and literature. But if we are to be teachers of its message we must be prepared to give some intelligent thought to its study. False teachers have not done half the harm achieved by orthodox ignorance.

Speaking thus of the Scriptures, the opportunity is afforded me to grant the request to remark on some difficulties presented in teaching the Bible to children. Most difficulty seems to be experienced in regard to the first chapter of Genesis, and this is, I think, because we reluctantly relinquish a literal interpretation. I believe the first chapter depicts a series of glorious visions vouchsafed to some ancient sage or prophet, and is a pictorial representation not only of Creation in its scientific order, but also in its natural and moral sequence and evolution. The fiat of God is the human expression of the Eternal Will that lies behind all force and matter.

No other story of the Creation could tell in such eloquent language, or with such graphic description, the sublime grandeur of God's work; must we supplant this story by the substitution of another lacking its grace and beauty, simply because some person maintains that truth ceases to be truth if it is clothed

in allegory? I do not condemn the poet who tells me the sun rose above the eastern hills, or call in question the veracity of the preacher who speaks about the angels' wings; why then should I discredit the Bible because it uses human thought and a romance which gives vividness and charm to its pages? If my child tells me he does not believe the world was made in six days, I reply, the Bible seems to imply that it was made in six nights if you will insist upon a literal interpretation, for it states that from evening to morning constituted each day.

I cannot attempt on this occasion to answer all the questions presented to me, but I suggest that we should remember that the ancient character of the Bible is sufficient to cause difficulty in attempting to explain its pages. Parts of the book were written at a remote period. The dates in the margins, supplied by Archbishop Ussher, are utterly untrustworthy. The language of the Old Testament is foreign to our speech and thought, and has only been preserved by artificial expedients. Several words if not meaningless are ambiguous. Yet this book treats of the noblest science, the highest philosophy, and the greatest interests of mankind. In consideration of these facts it is pitiable to hear men of no profound thought and no earnest study pronounce their judgment on the truthfulness of its record. Men who would not dream of vaunting their judgment against Darwin's *Origin of Species*, yet appear to think it is their right and province to calmly deny, or patronisingly allow, the reliability of this most ancient and wonderful of books.

To conclude. Childhood is the age of quick imagination, of intense feeling, of deep affection, of fervent appreciation of the beautiful, of true innocence, of pure sincerity. It is the age when gross thought has not entered the temple, when fleshly desires and meditated revenge have not sullied the brightness of the immortal, and when disappointment and failure have not dimmed the lustre of ambition. It is the age of buoyant, confident hope, before the shadows of doubt have gathered.

Parents, in that age of our children ours is the kingdom, the power and the glory. And then, if ever, it depends on us whether they shall live unto the body and die, unto the soul—and, clever it may be, but cold, self-centred and loveless it must be—or unto the spirit, with its great possibilities here and its infinite promise hereafter.

WORDSWORTH THE HUMANIST.

BY FELIX ASHER,
Incumbent of Trinity Chapel, Brighton.

PART II.

I NOW address myself to the task of seizing the secret of a few of Wordsworth's most representative poems. It is true, of course, that all Wordsworth's poems are animated by his spirit, but the amount of life which is revealed in the different parts varies considerably. In every great picture there are certain parts which have but a small portion of the painter's spirit in them. The goldfinch, in a famous picture of Raphael's, might have been painted by almost any artist of his day; the faces of the Madonna and Child give us the whole artist, Raphael. So, in Wordsworth's poetry, there are many parts that hardly rise above the commonplace, and if our attention is allowed to rest on these, we find, as many readers of his verse have already found, nothing to awaken in us deeper sensations, nothing to stimulate the imaginative mind. Let me therefore press upon you the claims of the following poems to give the most vivid expression to Wordsworth's essential and permanent message to man:—"Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey"; "Simon Lee"; "The Old Cumberland Beggar"; "She dwelt among the untrodden ways"; "A Poet's Epitaph"; "The Solitary Reaper"; "Michael"; "Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree"; the sonnets, "Composed upon Westminster Bridge," and "Calais"; "I wandered lonely as a cloud"; the sonnet on "Personal Talk," and on "The influence of the world's spirit"; and lastly, "The Prelude"; "The Excursion"; and the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood."

Remember that if the details of some of the poems seem to you trivial, they were as full of meaning to Wordsworth as the common sights and flowers are to an invalid who escapes from the artificial air of a sick room. After having his mind